

Communigram

JANUARY 10, 2007

VOL. 39 No. 1

From the Desk of Rev. Michael Mulberry

BorderLinks is a bi-national non-profit organization that offers experiential educational seminars along the border focusing on the issues of global economics, militarization, immigration, and popular resistance to oppression and violence. With these topics occupying the spotlight in public and political debate, it is more important than ever that US citizens witness a reality affected by our policies and lifestyles.

Join us for this dynamic immersion experience in the compelling setting of the borderlands. Be ready to open your hearts and minds in new ways and return home transformed and ready to share with others about the issues, culture, economics, and lives of people living along the US/Mexico border.

Those are the two introductory paragraphs to the BorderLinks website, the organization with whom I am facilitating a delegation April 16-20 of this year. Several folks may have heard me hold out this delegation to the congregation after worship, but I did not want to miss anyone who might be interested and just did not receive any information about the delegation. I did not mention the delegation I was to lead last year all that often and cursed

myself for not doing so more when I had to cancel in 2006.

I continue to offer this delegation because I believe the issue of immigration is part of a "justice circle" that has been an important part of my faith experience. Many of the people flowing across the border on a regular basis are from the Mexican states of Chiapas, where I spent a year doing missionary work, and Oaxaca, where I recently took an emergency delegation. The poverty, violence, and issues of food justice all contribute to the need for people in Chiapas and Oaxaca, Mexico, to walk across the border looking for an alternative to their lives in Mexico. (The present Executive Director of BorderLinks was a UCC Illinois Conference missionary in Chiapas.) Our congregation has also begun work around food justice that asks questions about industrial agriculture, genetically modified food, and local and organic food. Food justice, poverty and violence in Mexico, and immigration flow in and out of one another in this "justice circle."

So I encourage anyone who is interested in being part of this Monday through Friday delegation, April 16-20, to let me know. I think these experi-

ences are fantastic introduction to the struggle for human rights and justice issues around several issues. We will talk to all the people along the Mexican border who are a part of the immigration story—Mexican families along the border, border patrol, migrant ministries in the United States and Mexico, migrants themselves, and governmental organizations. You may even meet, as I did, Rev. John Fife, a historical leader in the sanctuary movement, and Rick Uffer-Chase, the founder of BorderLinks and think you will come back somewhat of an expert on these issues. I think you will come back transformed by the experience.

Please contact me if you are interested in going on the delegation I will facilitate or on **any BorderLinks delegation** (see www.borderlinks.org for a schedule of possible delegations throughout the year).

Shalom,
Mike



VALPARAISO PROJECT

December 11, 2006

The Reverend Michael S. Mulberry
 Community United Church of Christ
 805 South Sixth
 Champaign, IL 61820

Dear Michael,

On behalf of the Valparaiso Project, please accept my congratulations on the successful completion of the Practicing Our Faith Grant project, "Just Eating and Holy Tables." This project was a lovely balance of action and reflection, study and service, worship and work, truth telling and hope. This is the fruit of your excellent model and process for adult education: observing, discerning, acting, and celebrating. We were particularly delighted to support the congregational feast at Prairie Fruits Farm because it embodied and encouraged intergenerational practice, education and formation. And what a delicious feast you describe. Thank you for being wise and faithful stewards of the monies remaining from the cooking classes and the feast.

Thank you for your perseverance in publishing the article. This is one way local, congregationally based projects can have a wider impact. This splendidly conceived and wisely executed project needs to be shared with others. It is an excellent example of what the Valparaiso Project hopes to foster among people of faith. You weave together several practices: Caring for creation, honoring the body, seeking justice, shaping community, breaking bread, and keeping Sabbath. You capture the heart of a practices approach to life and faith: the down-to-earth embodiment of Christian faith, the communal nature of our life in Christ, and a grace-filled, God-initiated response to fundamental human needs. You write that your grandest hope is that this process has 'set in motion alternative practices that will build a more just and sustainable world.' I would add that the process has set in motion the formation and transformation of a community that longs for, leans toward, and lives today as if the world were already among us.

The confession of a Lutheran: I would have been one who "bristled" during the outdoor service when fair trade chocolate drink was substituted for wine at the Eucharist. Homemade flat bread? Of course. Even strawberries as a sign of the sweetness of God's grace at this table. But I would have favored pouring a fair trade wine, an organic wine, or some of the wine you tasted at the local winery into the cup. Imagine the impact churches could have if every parish studied, sought, and used such fruit of the vine. At the same time, I commend your vision and your risk-taking. Like you, I long for sacramental signs that make visible, audible, edible the holy connections between the Eucharist, our domestic tables, the table of creation, persons tilling the land or fishing the waters, the hungry poor, the needy rich, the fruit in due season that God provides, and the promised feast of Christ's mercy and justice, peace and joy set before even now, even here.

I am delighted that my colleague Don was of such help to you, especially in times of anxiety. You will have the pleasure of one more conversation with him about this project. He will call you within the next several weeks to schedule a telephone conversation. Together you will step back and look at the whole process, tie up any loose ends, perhaps unravel a few more, and think together about what might unfold next among the people of God at Community United Church of Christ.

All peace and joy be yours in believing during this Advent season.

Sincerely,

Susan Briehl
 cc: Dorothy Bass and Don Richter

Constitutional Amendment to Extend Interim Changes For January 28 Meeting

As mentioned in Moderator Musings in the last Communigram, we will be voting on a constitutional amendment to extend the interim changes implemented in November 2004. This amendment simply gives us "breathing room" to decide on the next polity. The group looking at the next church structure has come up with a model called "Many Gifts Polity" that if everything is approved, will be implemented in March or April 2007. As defined in the constitution, written notice of this amendment is being sent to the membership of the church 10 days before the meeting; I am using this article to do so.

Proposed Amendment:

We, the members of the Community United Church of Christ Administrative Committee, hereby move that the interim changes approved to the Community United Church of Christ Constitution on November 14, 2004 remain in effect until a new polity is approved or the January 2008 Annual Meeting, whichever takes place first.

Draft Copy of Many Gifts Polity Was Mailed

Hopefully you have received your draft copy of the Many Gifts Polity and have had time to examine its contents. Please note that we have scheduled meetings to discuss the polity in more informal settings. Our goal is to take feedback over the next few weeks, revise the document as needed, and present it for approval at the January Congregation meeting. If adopted, a nominating committee would spring into action and we should be ready to implement the new polity either in the beginning of March or April.

Please join us at one of the meetings scheduled on the following dates and places:

Sunday, January 14 - 9:00 am at Community United Church of Christ's Parlor

Tuesday, January 16 - 6:30 pm at Clark-Lindsay at Ruth and Ralph Fisher's Apartment

Sunday, January 21 - 11:30 am at Community United Church of Christ's Conference room

CUCC Polity Committee:

Denise Oligney-Estill and Susan Schnuer (co-chairs)

Lisa Treul

Tom Ward

Martha Seif

Mike Mulberry

CODAC OFFERINGS in 2007

We are ready to begin the first classes for the year 2007. Sign-up Sheets are on the bulletin board in the Parlor.

1. The Five Wishes-Advance Directives in Health Care

Sundays, 9:00 am in the Conference Room, February 4 through the 11
Facilitated by Linda Morgan and Dr. Ken Gilbert

2. With Open Hands

Sundays 9:00 am in the Conference Room, March 4 through April 1

Required reading: **With Open Hands** by Henri Nouwen

3. Assimilating New Members and Hospitality

Sundays, 9:00 am in the Conference Room, April 29 through May 27.

Facilitated by Rev. Mike Mulberry and Ms Eileen Gebbie

Annual Lunch & Meeting Sunday, January 28th

A meal will follow immediately after worship on Sunday, January 28th down in the Fellowship Hall. A main dish and drinks will be provided. Please bring a dessert to share. Because we want to be good stewards of the earth we are also asking you to bring your own table service and utensils. After lunch we will have our Annual Meeting. Thank you.

Annual Meeting Sunday, January 28th at 12:30 pm

The Annual Meeting of Community United Church of Christ is called for Sunday, January 28th at 12:30 pm, following lunch.

The agenda will include:

1. Approval of the minutes of the 2006 Annual Meeting, and of the May 21 and November 19 Congregational Meetings.
2. Reports from the Pastor, church officers, task groups, etc.
3. New Business:
 - A. Adoption of the 2007 proposed budget.
 - B. Report of the Nominating Committee and election of officers.
 - C. Extend the existing polity
 - D. Approval of the Many Gifts Polity
 - E. Report from Synthesis and Sustainability Committee
 - F. Other items as may come before the congregation.

Copies of the Annual Report will be mailed and available prior to the scheduled meeting.

Sincerely,
David Willcox, Clerk

Calendar of Events

1/11, Thursday ~ 9 am Bulletin Deadline; **8:00 pm** AA (FH)

1/13, Saturday ~ 9:00 am Women's Book Club *Espresso Royale* by Krannert

1/14, Sunday ~ Second Sunday After Epiphany ~ 9:00 am Sunday School for all ages (FH, R 1-5); **9:00 am** New Polity Discussion (P); **9:30 am** Choir Rehearsal (S); **10:15 am** Worship (S); **11:30 am** Coffee Hour (P); **11:30 am** Building Task Force (CR); **No Youth Group**; **7:00 pm** Administrative Committee Meeting (CR)

1/15, Monday ~ Martin Luther King Day Office Closed

1/16, Tuesday ~ 6:30 pm New Polity Discussion at Ruth and Ralph Fisher's apartment at Clark Lindsey

1/17, Wednesday ~ Noon Prayer Protest; **7:00 pm** Choir Rehearsal (P)

1/18, Thursday ~ 9 am Bulletin Deadline; **8:00 pm** AA (FH)

1/20, Saturday ~ 9:00 am Women's Book Club *Espresso Royale* by Krannert

1/21, Sunday ~ Third Sunday After Epiphany ~ 9:00 am Sunday School for all ages (FH, R 1-5); **9:30 am** Choir Rehearsal (S); **10:15 am** Worship (S); **11:30 am** Coffee Hour (P); **11:30 am** New Polity Discussion (CR); **6:00 pm** CUCC Youth Group (TR)

1/22, Monday ~ 10:00 am Communigram Deadline; **10:00 pm** Campus Choir

1/24, Wednesday ~ Noon Prayer Protest; **7:00 pm** Choir Rehearsal (P)

1/25, Thursday ~ 9 am Bulletin Deadline; **8:00 pm** AA (FH)

Flower Chart 2007

The Altar Flower Chart for 2007 can be found in the Parlor. If you wish to sponsor altar flowers for a specific Sunday in 2007 please sign up on the chart provided. **Dates Open:** January 28; February 25; March 4,

11, 25; April 29; May 6, 20; June 3, 10, 17, 24; July 1, 8, 15; August 5, 12, 23, 26; September 9, 16, 23, 30; October 14, 21, 28; November 4, 11; December 2, 9, 16 & 30.

Sponsorship is \$20 per Sunday and a check earmarked "Altar Flowers" can be placed in the offering plate or sent to the church office.

Youth Group



Our 3rd Annual 12th Night Feast was a roaring success. We had over 70 guests! We could not have done this without the help of many talented people from our congregation and community.

Thanks to Rev. Mike for writing a great script, and directing the cast.

Thanks to Caryl Henkel for bringing the characters and the fellowship hall to life through the amazing costumes and banners.

Thanks to Becky Duffield for sharing her culinary talents, and to **Pat Syoen and Brian Duffield** who work alongside her. Not only do they cook, but they also solicit area businesses for donations on behalf of the 12th Night Feast.

Many thanks to the following area businesses who donated goods to our cause:
Strawberry Fields, Old Time Deli and Meat Shop, Save-A-Lot, Meijer, Mirabelle Bakery, Schnucks.

And of course, thanks to all of you who purchased tickets and enjoyed the show. We appreciate your support of our Jr/Sr High Youth Group!

January Schedule:

January 14: No youth group for the Martin Luther King Holiday, but many of us will be at the Krannert Celebration.

January 21: Let's talk about this summer's work trip. We'll go over the possibilities and try to firm up the dates and the work.

January 28: I know we just finished one, but let's talk about future fundraisers! I have some ideas.

Sunday School

We are beginning a new unit for the new year, Jesus the Teacher. In this, we seek to engage our imaginations in exploring the coexisting realities of this world and the reality of God's kingdom. We will all be comforted by the news that we are blessed and have a special purpose. This will also be unsettling as we sort out what those blessings are, and what they require of us.

Our Bible passage for this unit comes from Matthew's beatitudes. The children are already beginning to experience the way that Jesus tips our expectations upside down as he proclaims who is blessed!

Looking ahead, we will be recruiting for our next unit, Jesus Prays, in the coming weeks. Please contact Tracy if you are interested in leading one of the Rotations during March and April.

Confirmation



Don't forget, Confirmation meets on Sunday, January 21, from 4-6 pm. Nathan Smith's family is providing the meal. All confirmands need to come prepared to share what they learned in their interview, as well as prepared to discuss chapter 2 of "Faith's Family Album".



Eight people joined the membership of Community United Church of Christ on Sunday, November 12, 2006. The following is one of the biographies offered by his sponsor that did not make the last newsletter. Welcome, Mark!

Mark Althouse

Born in Fargo, North Dakota Mark moved to Morgantown, West Virginia with his family when he was two. His father is

a professor at WVU and his Mom had a distinguished career in epidemiology with OSHA. Mark's brother is a history professor at UT Chattanooga. He attended Washington University in St Louis studying Physics and Math. After obtaining a PhD in Atmospheric Sciences at U of Mark headed back to SoCal (a second time) for a postdoc at UC Irvine. Currently he's the program coordinator for the farmdoc project at U of I where he manages and develops websites and oversee staff research among other things.

He and his wife, Anna were married and also had their daughter Dara in 2003. She has a 'nitro burning' engine and currently attends Montessori preschool in Savoy. Mark feels that the family is always exciting and challenging and a great place to get to know him-

self better. He's a bike racer, but family commitments have limited riding and racing time. Mark currently manages the local C-U Racing cycling team. He's looking forward to getting back to serious bike racing, traveling with the family and being a Dad. Mark enjoys Mountaineer sports (ravidly), cooking, intellectual pursuits and good coffee.

The CUCC community is a great find for them and they hope to contribute to it for a long time.

~ Paul Vaaler

Poinsettia

A poinsettia was missing from the listing during Christmas.

Jean Creswell, Kitty and Bill gave one in memory of William Creswell, husband and father.



It's something we ALL should think about!



Most of us hope to be able to care for ourselves for our entire lives. But the tragic cases of Terri Schiavo and Karen Quinlan remind us that changes in our health can occur even at a young age. The reality is many things can happen to change our ability to care for ourselves, including serious medical illness such as a stroke, or a sudden life-threatening accident. Even a gradual chronic illness can decrease our ability to think clearly and communicate our wishes.

How reassuring it would be to our families if they knew our wishes regarding:

1. Which person you want to make health care decisions for you if you can't speak for yourself
2. The kind of medical treatment you want or don't want
3. How comfortable you want to be
4. How you want people to treat you
5. What you want your loved ones to know

The CODAC Five Wishes presentations being offered in February are designed to address just that in clearly understood language. Enroll in and attend all three sessions of Five Wishes as a way to figure out how to open this conversation in your own family.

To members, friends, and visitors:

In order to promote greater community at the church—especially as we grow in size—the God Is Still Speaking (GISS) committee and CODAC propose that they coordinate small groups (about 8-10 people) who would meet together regularly for a year. GISS proposes coordinating small dinner groups, something like the Fireside Dinners, but which would allow people to get to know others in the church more deeply through eating together every month or two for a year. CODAC would be interested in coordinating small-group Bible studies.

Please let us know your thoughts on these proposed initiatives and whether you would be interested in participating in either or both of them by filling out the form below BY FEBRUARY 11, 2007. You can leave it in the church office or return it to Patricia Brady, 701 West Healey Street, Champaign IL 61820.

Your name: _____

Would you be interested in participating in a small Bible Study group that would meet regularly for a semester or a year?

Not at this time

Yes (Please fill out Section 1 below)

Would you be interested in participating in a small dinner group that would meet monthly or bimonthly for the next year?

Not at this time

I prefer the bi-annual Fireside/Springside Dinner format

Yes (Please fill out Section 2 below)

Section 1 (Questions on regular small-group Bible studies)

Please read the following statements and check all that apply to you:

I would like to meet with the same small group for a year

I would like to meet with the same small group for a semester

I would like to meet bi-monthly

I would like to meet monthly

I would like to meet weekly or bi-weekly

I am interested in a serious commitment (e.g. getting through the entire Bible, involving doing much reading and preparation outside of the meetings)

I am interested in doing some reading and preparation before our meetings

I would prefer to just show up and do the reading for that week together

I am interested in following a set Bible study curriculum with prepared materials

I would like the Bible study topics to grow organically out of participants' interests

I would like to learn about the Bible, its historical context, and its interpretation by various Bible scholars

I would prefer to focus on connecting the message of the Bible to my life and our contemporary world

I would like to learn about the other members of the Bible study and engage in deep discussions that enable us to grow as a small community

I would like the groups to be as heterogeneous as possible

I would like the groups to be coordinated by different demographics (e.g. the young singles group; the young couples group; the GLBT group; or whatever).

If yes to above: what group do you see yourself a part of? _____

I would like the groups to meet in participants' homes, with the host rotating each month

I would like the groups to meet at the church, with childcare provided

Are there specific days of the week that you cannot meet or that you prefer? (e.g. Wednesday evening is out; weekends are preferred)

Section 2 (Questions on regular small-group dinners)

We plan to compile the results of this questionnaire and then assign people to a small group based on compatibility (per this survey). We will let you know what group you are in by late February, and then ask one person in each group to coordinate the first dinner; each group will determine for itself when and how often to meet.

Would you be most interested in holding the dinners:

- At the church, with (optional) childcare provided
 - At the members' homes, with the host rotating each month
- If you checked the above: How many people would you be comfortable hosting, including yourself? _____

Would you like the dinners to be:

- Casual potluck (host providing something like a chili; guests providing simple side dishes)
- Take-out or order-in (e.g. pizza), with expenses shared by the group

Would you like the groups to be:

- As heterogeneous as possible
 - Coordinated by different demographics (e.g. the young singles group; the young couples group; the GLBT group; or whatever).
- If yes to above: what group do you see yourself a part of? _____

What particular accommodations do you need or would you be willing to provide in your home?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <u>I need:</u> _____ | <u>I can provide:</u> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a vegetarian dinner | <input type="checkbox"/> a vegetarian dinner |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a wheelchair-accessible location | <input type="checkbox"/> a wheelchair-accessible location |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a home that will allow toddlers or preschoolers | <input type="checkbox"/> a home that will allow toddlers or preschoolers |

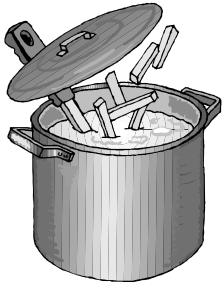
If you have small (or bigger) children, what would be your preference?

- I want my children to accompany me to the dinner
- I want my children to accompany me to the dinner, and I would prefer to be in a group with other children as well
- I will leave my children home with a babysitter
- I would like the church to provide childcare (even if the adult dinners are at individual homes)

Will other people in your household (e.g. your life partner or children) will be accompanying you to the dinners? Please provide a number and, if you have children, their ages:

Are there specific days of the week that you cannot meet, or that are better than others? (e.g. Wednesday evening is out; weekends are preferred)

Please let us know if you have any other comments or preferences related to this proposal:



Last Call for Soup

CUCC is making soup for Times center, due as soon as you can get it there, but they will accept it any time, they are flexible! TIMES has been running short of soup over the holidays, and we appreciate all of

you who took buckets on December 24 and have taken your soup over.

If you want to make soup for the shelter, buckets are available in the parlor during the coffee hour. Any vege-

table, pasta, meat soup is fine, chili is a favorite. Vegetarian is also useful. No cream soups, they do not freeze well. PLEASE LABEL and date your soup, it makes keeping the soup moving easier. You may bring it to church and put it in upstairs kitchen freezer or you may take it directly to the TIMES building on the corner of Washing and Market in Champaign. They will ask if you want to sign the donor book and we encourage you to do so. Thank you again for your concern.

Janice Wilson 367 5783.

Women's Fellowship Meeting

Members of Community United Church of Christ Women's Fellowship met on December 14, 2006, at the home of the Rev. Karen Bush. The Christmas tree and the beautiful Christmas decorations provided a wonderful introduction to the season. Karen Bush, Pat and Tei Barnhart hosted the gathering and together with Marianna Janssen, Becky Hanson and Jean Creswell provided refreshments. Pat Barnhart gave devotions and Caryl Henkel provided a

Christmas selection. Members of the group had brought all sorts of toys, stuffed animals, and items of children's clothing to be delivered to the Crisis Nursery. Following the meeting Marianna Janssen and Jean Creswell took the gifts to the Crisis nursery. The Nursery Director was most appreciative of the group concern and provided a tour of the building and a description of the service the Nursery provided for the children in a real crisis situation.

The next meeting of the Women's Fellowship will be held on February 8, 2007 at 1:00 pm at Clark Lindsey Village. Hostesses are Mary Ellen Andrew and Ruth Fisher. Devotions will be given by Jean Due. Diana Thate, R. D. will speak to the group on Nutrition Concerns for Older Adults.

The UCC Campus Ministry proudly presents.....
(drumroll please)

*THE ANNUAL
"EVERYONE IS A SWEETHEART DINNER"!*



Please mark your calendars now for this wonderful evening which will charm (feed well) and entertain the whole family and all your friends.

SATURDAY February 17

Cost: \$20 adult \$10 kids 10 and over free kids under 10

Stay tuned for more information coming your way soon!



**COMMUNITY
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

*A Just Peace, Progressive,
LGBT Open and Affirming Congregation*



805 South Sixth, Champaign, IL 61820

Ph: (217) 344-5091 FAX: (217) 344-5008

Website: www.community-ucc.org

Email: info@community-ucc.org

Office Hours: Mon-Thu 9 am-3 pm

CHURCH STAFF

Pastor: Rev. Michael Mulberry
mike@community-ucc.org

Religious Education Director:
Rev. Tracy Heilman
tracy@community-ucc.org

Choir Director: Robert Smith
smithrob@champaignschools.org

Organist: Linda Vaughn
lindavaughn@community-ucc.org

Facilities Manager: Robert Scaggs
bobscaggs@community-ucc.org

Office Manager: Cindy Dodd
info@community-ucc.org

Parish Nurse: Linda Morgan
Community Life Calendar Keeper:
Vicky Roberson

victoriarobertson@insightbb.com

Ombuds Person: Deborah Townsend
dtown34@sbcglobal.net

Child Care Providers: Laura Czopek, Jessica
Bush, David Robertson

UCC CAMPUS MINISTRY STAFF

Campus Minister: Rev. Karen Bush
Karen@community-ucc.org

Communigram

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Urbana, IL
Permit No. 18

Address Service Requested

The next Communigram will be mailed out on January 24.

Sunday Schedule

9:00 am ~ Sunday School
9:30 am ~ Choir Rehearsal
10:15 am ~ Worship
11:30 am ~ Coffee Hour
6-8 pm ~ Youth Group



Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration

- Friday, January 12** 4:00 pm "Reflections ...Through the Eyes of the Dream" at Holiday Inn, Urbana
- Sunday, January 14** 5:00 pm Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Celebration at Krannert Center , Urbana
- Monday, January 15** 8:00 am Martin Luther King, Jr. Unity Breakfast at The Vineyard Church, Urbana
9:00 am Urbana Rotary Club—Youth Festival at the Illinois Street Residence Hall
- Thursday, January 18** 7:00 pm Film Screening: After Innocence at Virginia Theatre
- Saturday, January 20** 2:00 pm Justice and Activism: Then and Now at Krannert Center
- Tuesday, January 23** 7:00 pm Film Screening: American Blackout at Allen Hall Main Lounge
- Wednesday, January 24** 7:00 pm Speak Café: Justice and Activism: Then and Now at The Courtyard Café, Illini Union

For more detailed information go to <http://www.admin.uiuc.edu/mlk/calendar/calendar.html>.

7002 62-1EFCB